

**CLAIMS**

1. A method of manufacturing a fixed denture (18,58)  
5 comprising:  
    identifying the surface of a tooth preparation  
    (110);  
    relating the identified surface to a near net  
shape version of the denture (120); and  
10 altering the near net shape version (130) to  
produce a denture having an inner profile which  
substantially replicates the surface of the tooth  
preparation (140).
- 15 2. A method according to claim 1 wherein, the inner  
profile includes an offset (36).
3. A method according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein,  
the surface of the tooth is identified by digitising  
20 the surface.
4. A method according to claim 3 wherein, data  
produced when the surface is digitised is manipulated  
by one or both of producing a wax model (54) or virtual  
25 wax-up of the denture.
5. A method according to claim 3 wherein, data  
produced when the surface is digitised is related to a  
near net shape version using best fit techniques.  
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6. A method according to any preceding claim wherein,  
the near net shape is altered by machining.

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7. A method according to any preceding claim wherein, the near net shape version is a pre-formed sintered ceramic shell (20).

5 8. A method according to claim 7 wherein, the pre-formed sintered ceramic shell (20) comprises one of a plurality of standard tooth shapes (40) from which the most appropriate shape is chosen.

10 9. A method according to claim 7 wherein, the pre-formed sintered ceramic shell (20) comprises an individually produced tooth shape (42).

10. A method according to any of claims 7 to 9  
15 wherein, the pre-formed sintered ceramic shell (20) is made by one of single (48) or double (49) sided pressing.

11. A method according to claim 1 wherein, a reference  
20 feature (60) is provided on both the near net shape version (50) and the preparation.

12. A fixed denture manufactured according to any preceding claim.

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